

Message Text

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ACTION AGR-20

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8891

UNCLAS RABAT 1980

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: EAGR, MO

SUBJECT: CURRENT GRAIN CONDITIONS

REF: (A) STATE 074727 (B) RABAT 1799

1. COMBINED 1973 PRODUCTION 4 PRINCIPAL MOROCCAN GRAINS, I. E., BREAD WHEAT, DURUM, BARLEY AND CORN TENTATIVELY ESTIMATED AT 3,050,000 METRIC TONS FROM 4,230,000 HECTARES. THIS REPRESENTS A PRODUCTION DECLINE OF MORE THAN 30 PERCENT FROM 1972. WHILE CROPS GOT OFF TO GOOD START IN ALL AREAS, RAINFALL WAS INSUFFICIENT DURING CRITICAL FEBRUARY - MARCH PERIOD TO SUSTAIN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOME WESTERN AND SOUTHERN PROVINCES, WITH A PARTICULARLY HEAVY DECLINE IN BARLEY PRODUCTION. GRAIN CROPS IN NORTHERN AND EASTERN PROVINCES ARE STILL PROGRESSING SATISFACTORILY AND PROSPECTS ARE FOR ABOVE AVERAGE 1973 PRODUCTION IN THOSE AREAS; THUS, PARTIALLY OFFSETTING DROUGHT LOSSES.

2. PRELIMINARY ACREAGE AND PRODUCTION ESTIMATES FOR 1973 AND FINAL 1972 ESTIMATES AS FOLLOWS IN THOUSANDS:

	ACREAGE		PRODUCTION	
	1973	1972	1973	1972
BREAD WHEAT	650	589	600	723
DURUM	1,530	1,469	1,250	1,682
BARLEY	1,600	1,593	900	1,744
CORN	450	451	300	292

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3. ON BASIS ABOVE, GRAIN IMPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 1973, EXPECTED TO REACH APPROXIMATELY 900,000 METRIC TONS INCLUDING 600,000 TONS BREAD WHEAT AND 300,000 TONS BARLEY.

SISTING ON

PRIOR RECOGNITION. MRS GANDHI WELCOMED ALSO PRESIDENT NIXONS INITIATIVE IN SINO- AMERICAN THAW AND EXPRESSED HOPE FOR CLOSER RELATIONS WITH UNITED STATES. ACCORDING TO MRS BANDARANAIKE, BOTH PRIME MINISTERS WERE PLEASED WITH VISIT. FOR GSL, INDIAN STANCE ON REGIONAL ISSUES WAS POSITIVE AND REASSURING, WHILE VISIT ALSO SERVED AS USEFUL BALANCE TO SCHEDULED DISPLAY LATER THIS MONTH OF SINO- CEYLONSE TIES AT OPENING OF PRC- FINANCED BANDARANAIKE MEMORIAL HALL. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIME MINISTER GANDHIS STATE VISIT TO SRI LANKA, APRIL 27-29, WAS MARKED BY HEAVY USE OF PUBLIC EXPOSURE FOR INDIAN PRIME MINISTER AND BY CONSIDERABLE GSL SATISFACTION (AT LEAST IN PUBLIC) WITH ITS OUTCOME. INTENSE PACE INCLUDED THREE ROUNDS OF TALKS WITH MRS BANDARANAIKE, TWO STATE BANQUETS WITH SPEECHES, ADDRESS TO NATIONAL STATE ASSEMBLY, AND PRESS CONFERENCE BEFORE DEPARTURE APRIL 29. THROUGH IT ALL MRS GANDHI CONCENTRATED ON GENERAL THEMES, TOUCHING WIDELY, SOMETIMES ELOQUENTLY, ON SUBJECTS RANGING FROM SHARED DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIALIST IDEALS OF TWO COUNTRIES TO POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF SUBCONTINENT AND BROAD RANGE OF REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. EQUALLY PROMINENT WAS HER EMPHASIS ON MUTUAL CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION AS MEANS TO RESOLVING BILATERAL PROBLEMS. IN HER SEVERAL ADDRESSES, MRS GANDHI ADROITLY INTERWOVE PHILOSOPHICAL IDEALS AND MORAL JUDGMENTS WITH POLITICAL OPTIONS AND POLICIES, ELICITING SYMPATHETIC RESPONSE IN SRI LANKA. TONE OF VISIT COMPLEMENTED FREQUENT REFERENCES BY MRS BANDARANAIKE AND OTHER CEYLONES SPOKESMEN TO NEHRU ERA AND NEHRU FAMILY.

3. VISIT WAS PRECEDED BY PRESS CHORUS DETAILING MAJOR BILATERAL IRRITANTS AND CALLING FOR POSITIVE INDIAN ACTION
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IN RESOLVING THEM. COMMUNIQUE ISSUED APRIL 29 REVEALED SOME GAINS FOR SRI LANKA:

A) SIRIMAVO- SHASTRI PACT: GOI AGREED TO ACCEPT PROGRESSIVE YEARLY TEN PERCENT STEP- UP IN REPATRIATION OF INDIAN TAMILS TO INDIA. BEGINNING WITH CURRENT BASE OF ABOUT 35,000 DEPARTEES IN 1972, INCREMENT WILL ALLOW ANNUAL NUMBER TO MOUNT RAPIDLY. WHILE COMMUNIQUE MADE NO REFERENCE TO MAJOR GSL OBJECTIVE OF REOPENING REGISTRATION LISTS FOR INDIAN CITIZENSHIP, PRO- GOVT SUN MAY 1 REPORTED THAT GSL WAS SATISFIED THAT INDIANS WILL ACCEPT FULL TOTAL OF 525,000 REPATRIATES SPECIFIED BY PACT.

INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER COELHO TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT NEW
REPATRIATION SCHEME WILL BUILD ON TOTAL OF 160,000 ALREADY
DEPARTED OR PROCESSED FOR DEPARTURE. COELHO FORESEES
REPATRIATION OF FULL 525,000 BY 1980, ONLY ONE YEAR BEHIND
SCHEDULE ESTABLISHED BY 1964 PACT. GOI FURTHER PLEDGED THAT
DECISION ON 150,000 PERSONS NOT COVERED BY PACT " WOULD BE
ARRIVED AT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE". THIS SERVES TO ALLAY GSL
FEAR THAT INDIANS MIGHT INSIST ON FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF
ORIGINAL PACT BEFORE TAKING UP RESIDUAL QUESTION.

B) TRADE IMBALANCE: RS 100 MILLION TRADE DEFICIT WITH
INDIA OF MAJOR CONCERN TO GSL. COMMUNIQUE RECORDED DECISION
" TO PROMOTE GREATER ECONOMIC COOPERATION" BUT NOTED " FURTHER
EFFORTS NECESSARY TO DEVISE WAYS AND MEANS". AD
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